1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

cabin, bunkhouse, and the residences of sons-in-law. From here the people go out to hunt, fish, and trap from early fall to late spring. Such a settlement is generally identified with its oldest resident, who lives here with his family and anyone else who has been invited or accepted to trap on the owner's trap line. Due to the long period in which brush and firewood have been gathered around most settlements, the surrounding area is generally well cleared and presents a spacious open appearance in the otherwise forested environment. An attempt is made to keep the immediate environs of a settlement free of willow and other brush (see Fig. 5).

As has already been pointed out, the structures in a settlement are arranged without regard to pattern. Generally they are on one side of a worn and narrow path which skirts the river. From the settlement, trails radiate to other settlements, to Lower Post, and to the trap line. It is not unusual for settlements to be moved a short distance up or downstream and even across the river. Such moving probably occurs when the wood supply in a vicinity becomes exhausted.

Garbage and slop, which is not fed to dogs, is commonly poured over the cutbank. Behind the settlement, in the toilet brush, one encounters piles of moosehair and discarded clothing.

TRAVEL AND TRANSPORTATION

The most important of the exploitative activities discussed—hunting and trapping—can be efficiently carried on only after the people have moved from the relatively populous trading center to the isolated winter settlements. Here it is once more necessary for each family to spread out across the surrounding country to intercept game and fur. Since a considerable portion of the resources derived from the environment are not directly consumed, but are exchanged for traders' food and capital goods, movement back to the trading post is also essential. In brief, Kaska society is, by adaptive necessity, extremely dependent upon mobility.

Two types of travel and transportation may be distinguished for the Indians, long distance and local movement. The first type includes the movement of people with their furs and belongings to Lower Post and their return to the winter homes with food and other supplies. The distance involved in such travel varies, depending on the tribal district and the location of the winter settlement within it. Generally in this form of transportation, goods must be hauled from fifteen to seventy miles. The second type, local movement, designates the mobility of people and goods taking place within the tribal district. Such local travel includes the movement of persons from the settlements to temporary hunting and trap line camps, to fishing sites, and to neighboring winter settlements.

In order to avoid the needless duplication of the words "travel and transportation" it may be pointed out that practically all travel involves the simultaneous transportation of goods. Similarly transportation cannot be accomplished without travel by the owner or his representative. In general a person rarely undertakes more than a day's travel without company.

Summer travel is carried out over trails and rivers. In winter people generally travel over trails, although they also utilize the frozen surfaces of rivers and lakes. Summer trails are

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12
Upper Liard

pieces with babiche line countersunk in order to avoid wear by friction At the end of the winter a careful man hung his toboggan in a tree on its upturned nose, the heavy brush protecting the vehicle from rain.

In loading a toboggan the traveler placed the heaviest load in front, this practice facilitating handling of the vehicle. Women drew toboggans when moving camp but men returning from a hunt drew meat on skin or wooden vehicles. With the introduction of dogs large and strong enough for traction, the tandem hitch came into use for traveling through bush. Toboggans were not used to transport people, with the exception of small children.

The powdery snow of the Cassiar would have hindered foot travel during a large part of the year had means not been available for adapting to this boreal forest condition. To break a trail on which the toboggan could move easily without sinking too deeply, as well as for hunting in soft snow, people employed snowshoes. An origin tale explains the introduction of these aids to travel.

In the beginning people couldn't walk as they had no snowshoes. An old man suggested taking advantage of the upraised end of a spruce branch. Wearing such brush on his feet he went up into the mountains to kill porcupine. The man's name was Kligadata, "snowshoe filling father." The people tried the idea but couldn't go far. The old man then hit upon the improved device of a snowshoe frame. He fashioned one with a stone knife and used a beaver tooth chisel to drill large holes in it. A porcupine tooth set in that animal's jawbone served to drill the holes for the fine filling. These people showed everybody how to make snowshoes and the old man became rich making snowshoes for others (X).[9]

Aboriginally the Upper Liard Indians manufactured temporary, round and pointed snowshoes. A man caught in an early winter snowfall and lacking his regular snowshoes would prepare a camp and make temporary devices. Bending and lashing a branch of willow or some other easily pliable wood into a rough circle he further provided two crosspieces consisting of short lengths of willow split at either end. The split edges were pulled fanwise in the shape of a crude Y and each bar of the Y was then lashed to the willow frame. Of the three panels thus formed only the center one was filled with whatever odds and ends of skin line the maker happened to have in his possession. The fronts of such snowshoes were not usually upturned. The wearer discarded temporary snowshoes once he had reached the main camp. The use of two converging willow poles in constructing temporary snowshoes was not known.

The round or Loucheux type snowshoe is said to have been in early use along the upper Liard River. The native term, however, gives no clue to relative chronology being translated as "snowshoe with pieces overlapping in front." Spruce provided the preferred material for the frames. Although birch was sometimes substituted for spruce, the former wood is said to have picked up and carried too much snow in spring, thereby increasing the weight of the shoe. One informant (O) was much impressed with the use of maple for frames. He had secured a pair of maple snowshoes in Juneau made by a Tlingit Indian and claimed the wood to be perfect for shedding snow. This tree, how-

[9] We are inclined to see the last part of the story as a late addition to the tale. A young Tahltan woman reported that her people ascribe the origin of the snowshoe to Wolf.